

CHAPTER 2024-209

Committee Substitute for Committee Substitute for Senate Bill No. 808

An act relating to treatment by a medical specialist; amending s. 112.18, F.S.; authorizing firefighters, law enforcement officers, correctional officers, and correctional probation officers to receive medical treatment by a medical specialist for certain conditions under certain circumstances; requiring firefighters, law enforcement officers, correctional officers, and correctional probation officers to notify certain entities of their selection of a medical specialist; providing requirements for the firefighter's or officer's workers' compensation carrier, self-insured employer, or third-party administrator; requiring that the continuing care and treatment by a medical specialist be reasonable, necessary, and related to the firefighter's or officer's condition and authorized by the workers' compensation carrier, self-insured employer, or third-party administrator; specifying a reimbursement percentage for such treatment; defining the term "medical specialist"; providing an effective date.

Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

Section 1. Subsection (3) is added to section 112.18, Florida Statutes, to read:

112.18 Firefighters and law enforcement or correctional officers; special provisions relative to disability.—

(3)(a) Notwithstanding s. 440.13(2)(c), a firefighter, law enforcement officer, correctional officer, or correctional probation officer requiring medical treatment for a compensable presumptive condition listed in subsection (1) may be treated by a medical specialist. Except in emergency situations, a firefighter, law enforcement officer, correctional officer, or correctional probation officer entitled to access a medical specialist under this subsection must provide written notice of his or her selection of a medical specialist to the firefighter's or officer's workers' compensation carrier, self-insured employer, or third-party administrator, and the carrier, self-insured employer, or third-party administrator must authorize the selected medical specialist or authorize an alternative medical specialist with the same or greater qualifications. Within 5 business days after receipt of the written notice, the workers' compensation carrier, self-insured employer, or third-party administrator must authorize treatment and schedule an appointment, which must be held within 30 days after receipt of the written notice, with the selected medical specialist or the alternative medical specialist. If the workers' compensation carrier, self-insured employer, or third-party administrator fails to authorize an alternative medical specialist within 5 business days after receipt of the written notice, the medical specialist selected by the firefighter or officer is authorized. The continuing care and treatment by a medical specialist must be reasonable,

necessary, and related to tuberculosis, heart disease, or hypertension; be reimbursed at no more than 200 percent of the Medicare rate for a selected medical specialist; and be authorized by the firefighter's or officer's workers' compensation carrier, self-insured employer, or third-party administrator.

(b) For purposes of this subsection, the term "medical specialist" means a physician licensed under chapter 458 or chapter 459 who has board certification in a medical specialty inclusive of care and treatment of tuberculosis, heart disease, or hypertension.

Section 2. This act shall take effect October 1, 2024.

Approved by the Governor May 29, 2024.

Filed in Office Secretary of State May 29, 2024.